

Central Indiana

May 2016

Climate Summary

68th Coolest on record at Indianapolis

71st Driest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

A warm start on the 1st immediately transitioned to cooler than normal conditions in the wake of a cold front as highs struggled to get into the 60s from the 2nd through the 5th. Highs rose back into the 70s briefly ahead of a frontal passage on the 7th, then rose to the highest temperatures of the first half of the month on the 11th in advance of another cold front as highs made it into the upper 70s and lower 80s.

A persistent upper level trough developed over the region in the wake of the frontal passage on the 11th, resulting in an extended stretch of cool and at times chilly weather that would last for about a week. Highs were commonly in the 50s and lower 60s through this period, with lows in the 30s and 40s. Patchy frost occurred on the mornings of the 15th and 16th as much of the region experienced lows in the mid to upper 30s.

More typical late May weather finally returned for the last third of the month as the upper trough departed off to the northeast. Many locations experienced a prolonged period of highs in the 80s over the last 10 days of May and the arrival of higher levels of humidity gave central Indiana the first taste of summer over the last week of the month. Mid and upper 80s were common through the Memorial Day weekend with a few locations making it to 90 degrees for the first time in 2016. While temperatures averaged near to slightly below normal in May for most areas, the warm finish to the month eliminated the large departures present over the region after the cooler weather experienced through the middle of the month.

Site	May 2016 Avg Temp	May 2016 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature

Indianapolis	62.3	-0.4	87 on 31	36 on 16
Lafayette	60.2	-1.7	88 on 31	34 on 15
Muncie	62.5	+0.7	91 on 31	39 on 15 and 16
Terre Haute	62.9	-0.1	88 on 31	39 on 15 and 16
Bloomington	62.2 (*)	-0.4	86 on 27, 30 and 31	38 on 16
Shelbyville	63.7	+0.8	91 on 31	38 on 16
Indy – Eagle Crk.	62.7	-0.1	88 on 31	37 on 16

At Indianapolis, there were 13 days with above normal average temperatures, 17 days with below normal average temperatures and 1 day with normal average temperatures.

(*) – Minimum and average temperature missing at Bloomington on May 13.

May 2016 was the 68th coolest in the Indianapolis area since 1871.

Precipitation

May's rainfall was below normal for almost all of Indiana. Monthly totals ranged from around 1.5 in portions of northern Indiana to 7 inches in south central Indiana. For the month, much of the state received between 2 and 5 inches of rain.

Precipitation during May favored southern Indiana while northern Indiana remained on the dry side. The first half of May was considerably wetter than the second half of May. Rainfall during the first half of May ranged from less than an inch in northern Indiana to almost 5 inches in southern Indiana. During the second half of May, only a few hundredths of an inch fell in portions of northeast Indiana with up to 3 inches in small areas of south central Indiana.

Rainfall was also more frequent during the first half of May. Measurable rain fell on 7 to 8 consecutive days in central Indiana from the 7th through the 14th compared to 10 to 14 days without measurable precipitation in northeast Indiana from the 18th through the 31st. Central Indiana was in the transition zone as a few areas remained on the wet side and other locations dried out during May.

River flooding that began in portions of southern Indiana as the result of heavy rains at the close of April, ended by the 7th. Limited river flooding occurred in the headwaters of the upper Wabash River watershed following locally heavy rainfall of 2 to 4 inches on the 9th and 10th.

Site	May 2016 Precipitation	May 2016 Difference from	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
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		Normal		
Indianapolis	3.74	-1.31	1.21 on 1	4 days 22-25
Lafayette	1.95	-2.24	0.46 on 9	4 days 22-25 and 28-31
Muncie	2.70	-1.71	0.71 on 12	3 days 22-24
Terre Haute	1.91	-4.72	0.31 on 13	4 days 22-25
Bloomington	3.33	-1.91	0.76 on 29	4 days 22-25
Shelbyville	2.32	-2.96	0.33 on 1	4 days 22-25
Indy – Eagle Crk.	3.25	-2.02	0.62 on 11	4 days 22-25

May 2016 was the 71st driest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Severe Weather

The month started out active with severe thunderstorms producing large hail and a tornado on the evening of the 1st. Several locations experienced hail to golf ball size or greater, including a swath of large hail extending across the southern Indianapolis metro area and into western Hancock County. Piles of hail remained on city streets in Beech Grove more than 24 hours after the hail fell. A brief EF0 tornado touched down near Linden in Montgomery County as well.

Thunderstorms produced large hail and wind damage on the evening of the 7th in Daviess and Knox Counties, primarily impacting Washington, Monroe City and areas to the northeast of Vincennes. Scattered strong to severe thunderstorms developed on the evening of the 11th, primarily impacting areas west of Interstate 65. The storms primarily produced damaging winds with trees downed.

For information on severe weather in other areas during May, visit the Storm Prediction Center “Severe Weather Event Summaries” website at <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/online/>.

Miscellaneous

The maximum wind gust at Indianapolis International Airport was 74 mph out of the west during the evening of the 1st as severe thunderstorms moved through the Indianapolis area. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 17 days during the month. Thunder was reported on 4 days during the month, and hail occurred on the 1st with the severe thunderstorms that impacted the Indianapolis metro area.

June 2016 Outlook

The official outlook for June 2016 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates an equal chance of above, below or near normal temperatures for central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 72.0 degrees. The outlook also calls for a slightly greater chance of below normal precipitation. The average precipitation for June at Indianapolis is 4.25”.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.